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Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Letter dated 3 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

In connection with the forthcoming interactive dialogue with the "commission of inquiry" on human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at the twenty-fifth session of the Human Rights Council, I have the honour to reiterate the principled position of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea categorically rejects the "commission of inquiry" and the "resolution" on the establishment of its mandate.

The position of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has already been clearly stated on several occasions through official communications, including my predecessors' letters dated 8 June 2007 (A/HRC/5/G/5), 30 January 2008 (A/HRC/7/G/3), 29 January 2009 (A/HRC/10/G/6), 21 January 2010 (A/HRC/13/G/7), 19 January 2011 (A/HRC/16/G/2), 1 February 2012 (A/ HRC/19/G/1) and 28 January 2013 (A/HRC/22/G/4) and addressed to your predecessors.

I would like to take this opportunity to draw your attention and, through you, that of the Human Rights Council to the following facts in particular.

Firstly, the "commission of inquiry" is a product of political confrontation and a plot against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and has no relevance to human rights.

As already well known, the "commission of inquiry" was established as a result of so-called "resolutions" on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

All those "resolutions" on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. including Human Rights Council resolution 22/13, have, without exception, been forcibly adopted as part of hostile and stifling acts constantly committed for more than half a century by the United States, Japan and the States members of the European Union and their allies with a view to eliminating the State and social system of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. They have no relevance to the genuine promotion and protection of human rights.

In 2003 alone, when the adoption of the first "resolution" on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was enforced, the United States and its Western allies had been running amok to stifle the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with the pretext of a nuclear issue and, as an extension of these manoeuvres, went so far as to initiate and enforce the adoption of the "resolution" on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on Human Rights.

As a matter of fact, bilateral dialogue and cooperation between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the European Union in the area of human rights, which had started in June 2001 for the first time in our history, was at an excellent stage at that time, while the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had been maintaining a considerably high level of cooperation with international human rights mechanisms.

There was no reason whatsoever for those countries to unilaterally and deliberately ignore this ongoing process of human rights dialogue and cooperation and to resort to hostility and confrontation had they not really been harbouring ulterior motives against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

In spite of this, the United States, Japan and the States members of the European Union chose to pursue confrontational enforcement of the adoption of the "resolution", and have since continued such hostility every year.

Since the motives of initiation of the "resolutions" on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were wrong and despicable, the process of their enforced adoption in its entirety was inevitably accompanied by plots and all sorts of injustice.

As an example, in 2003 alone, the "resolution" was treated as top secret at all stages, from drafting to official submission, tabled in the form of a surprise raid shortly before voting and forcibly adopted through the high-handedness, arbitrariness and behind-the-scenes pressure and trickery of the United States, Japan and the States members of the European Union. The traditional and common practice in the international human rights area relating to "prior notice to and consultations with the party directly concerned" was completely disregarded.

Even the initiators of the "resolution" acknowledged this wrongdoing.

Would there be any need for the United States, Japan and the European Union to pursue a confrontational "resolution" if they had no ulterior motive against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and were truly interested in dialogue and cooperation in the area of human rights?

Furthermore, why would these countries resort to such a despicable and sinister back-door approach if their acts were genuinely motivated by the promotion and protection of human rights?

In today's world, the human rights violations that merit the important attention of international human rights mechanisms, including the Human Rights Council, and need to be addressed urgently are those that were committed during the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq and the resultant civilian killings, such large-scale past crimes against humanity as sexual slavery, racial discrimination and the defamation of religion, and the human rights violations committed in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine.

The United States, Japan and the European Union have always talked about their uncompromising approach to human rights violations, no matter when, where and by whomever they are committed. Unfortunately, however, they make no reference whatsoever to the above-mentioned gross human rights violations for which they themselves and their allies are responsible.

Japan in particular committed such unprecedented crimes against humanity as the forcible drafting and abduction of 8.4 million people, 1 million genocidal killings and the sexual slavery of 200,000 people for the Japanese army, of the then population of 20 million during its military occupation of Korea for more than 40 years. Japan has not yet accepted its responsibility for these crimes, even in the new century.

Nevertheless, the United States, Japan and the European Union provoke innocent countries, including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. This constitutes extreme hypocrisy and double standards. Furthermore, this can be construed as nothing but a pursuit of a political objective in contravention of the genuine promotion and protection of human rights.

The "commission of inquiry", which originated and has existed through this machination, is none other than a marionette running here and there, representing the ill-minded purposes of such string-pullers as the United States, Japan and the States members of the European Union.

Secondly, the "commission of inquiry" and the "Special Rapporteur" run counter to the current trend against politicization and moving towards genuine dialogue and cooperation in the area of human rights.

The purpose of the establishment of the Human Rights Council was to eradicate politicization, selectivity and double standards, which were rampant in the international human rights field for more than 60 years, and to introduce a genuine mechanism of dialogue and cooperation beneficial to all.

Unfortunately, however, such country-specific mandates as those of the "Special Rapporteur" and the "commission of inquiry", which are the breeding ground for politicization, selectivity and double standards, still remain, giving rise to deep concern.

Western countries have always been stubborn in their attempt to maintain country-specific mandates in order to continue to behave as "human rights judges" trampling on the sovereignty and interfering in the internal affairs of those countries they dislike.

Country-specific mandates precisely mean confrontation. Confrontation can never be compatible with genuine dialogue and cooperation in any circumstance.

The position on country-specific mandates will therefore remain a criterion for determining whether or not one aspires to genuine dialogue and cooperation.

While the universal periodic review mechanism is in full operation as an indispensable function of the Human Rights Council, treating all countries equally and impartially, the anachronistic country-specific mandates singling out specific countries for naming and shaming continue to exist in parallel. This is completely ironic and unacceptable and, therefore, should no longer be tolerated.

Only then will it be possible for the Human Rights Council to avoid repeating the same failure as the Commission on Human Rights and become a mechanism of genuine dialogue and cooperation in the real sense envisaged by its founding ideals.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea regards sovereignty and dignity as its lifeline.

As in the past, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will continue to consistently maintain its principled position of opposing and rejecting the politically motivated "commission of inquiry" and the "Special Rapporteur".

I would be grateful if you could kindly circulate the present letter as a document of the twenty-fifth session of the Human Rights Council.

(*Signed*) So Se Pyong

Ambassador, Permanent Representative